

Greetings fellow York  
Countians,

This is a Fraud Alert issued by the York County Elder Abuse Task Force. Periodically, members of the York County District Attorney's office who prosecute these devastating financial crimes will offer warnings about the latest financial scams targeting seniors here in York County. Educating seniors about financial fraud is a top priority of the York County Elder Abuse Task Force. With that in mind, we want every senior in York County to remember the **3 Rs**: Recognize a potential scam; Refuse to make any hasty decisions; and Report suspicious activity to police. Stay safe and feel free to contact District Attorney Dave Sunday at the District Attorney's Office (717-771-9600) with any questions.

Dave Sunday  
District Attorney



## FRAUD ALERT – Publishers Clearing House Scams

Most Americans are familiar with Publishers Clearing House, a marketing company known for showing up on people's doorsteps with balloons, a bouquet of roses, and most importantly, a large check for a substantial sum of money. Unfortunately, scammers pretending to be Publishers Clearing House have taken advantage of American consumers ever since the first novelty check was cut.

Scammers start with a call or letter saying a consumer won the Publishers Clearing House sweepstakes. They may utilize names of prominent Publishers Clearing House employees, such as Dave Sayer or Todd Sloane, to make their contact seem legitimate. However, they tell the consumer that they need to send money to pay for fees and taxes in order to collect the prize. The consumer is asked to send money by Western Union or MoneyGram, or by getting a reloadable card or gift card. Scammers ask you to pay these ways because it's quick, convenient, and nearly impossible to trace the money.

Some scammers will go a step further and send a realistic-looking check in the mail. The consumer is told that they need to deposit the check and send some of the money back for various expenses. The catch is both the check and the expenses are made up. The check ultimately bounces and the consumer is out of whatever they sent to cover the fraudulent expenses.

If you think that you've won a prize, keep the following things in mind to protect yourself from being scammed:

- If you are being asked to send money in any form (money order, gift card, online payment such as PayPal, etc.) in order to claim a sweepstakes check, lottery winnings, or other prize, it's a scam.
- If you are instructed to deposit a check only to send a portion of funds back, it's a scam.

The FTC has a number of articles discussing prize scams available on its website, [ftc.gov](http://ftc.gov). Publishers Clearing House has a number of other tips for consumers at its website, <https://info.pch.com/fraud-protection-2/>.

If you find a scam, be sure to report it to the FTC at [ftc.gov/complaint](http://ftc.gov/complaint) or by calling 1-877-FTC-HELP.